



SOCIAL STUDIES

Lesson

Lesson

1

UNIT 3 – Family Types and Unions in the Caribbean Situations

Traditional and Non-Traditional Family Types Existing in the Caribbean

OBJECTIVES

At the end of this lesson you will be able to:

- a) identify the traditional family types existing in the Caribbean
- b) identify the non-traditional family types existing in the Caribbean and compare them



You are required to study the lesson summary below. When you are finished, you must go to the corresponding course material in your textbook or CSEC Self Study Guide.

GETTING STARTED

What is meant by “traditional”?

Tradition: the handing down of customs

Traditional: having existed for a long period of time without changing

The idea of the family is universal but in reality there is no one common definition of family. In this less in however, we are looking at both the traditional family which our ancestors knew and the non traditional family.

Detailed information on traditional families can be found in:

- a. your Self study guide – pgs 2-6
- b. Social Studies for the Caribbean – pgs 11-15 (Beddoe, Bernard, Rohlehr & Seepersad)
- c. Modules in Social Studies (Ramsawack & Umraw) – pgs 31-32

TRADITIONAL FAMILIES

Traditional families in the Caribbean are:

- i. the nuclear family
 - ii. the single parent family
 - iii. the extended family
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- i. The Nuclear Family. The nuclear family is made up of a man, a woman and their children. The couple may or may not be legally married. Children in this family may be the biological children of the couple or may be adopted.
 - ii. The Single Parent Family. As the name implies, there is only one parent in this family for whatever reason. In more cases than not, the resident parent is the mother. As the number of women choosing to raise children alone increases and as the legal ending of marriages through divorce increases, the number of single parent families also increases.
 - iii. The Extended Family. This family consists of several generations of family living together. This may include parents and their adult children, grandchildren, aunts, uncles, etc.

NON-TRADITIONAL FAMILIES

You may have noticed within recent decades, the structure of the family has been changing to the extent that not even sociologists can agree on a common definition of the word “family”. Furthermore, many do not consider these non traditional types as families. For further information, refer to:

- a. Your Self Study Guide – pg 5
- b. Social Studies for the Caribbean – Pg 18
- c. Modules in Social studies – pg 31

The types of family that fall into this category of non-traditional are:

- i. the reconstituted family
 - ii. the sibling family
 - iii. the same-sex family
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- i. The Reconstituted Family is known by several names. Some of these are the “reorganized family”, the “blended family” or the “step family”. In this situation, one spouse or both spouses bring into the new family arrangement, children from former relationships. The reconstituted family therefore is one in which at least one of the adults is a step parent.
 - ii. The Sibling Household. In this situation, both parents are absent from the home and an older brother or sister takes care of the home and the younger siblings
 - iii. The Homosexual or Same-Sex Family. This type of arrangement involves two men or two women living as man and wife. The marriage of same-sex couples is not legal in the Caribbean. While there are homosexual relationships here, there seems to be very few who attempt to create a family. Such couples usually choose to adopt children.



ACTIVITY

Now that you have studied this summary, you are expected to study the material stated above in your resource books. You should then test your knowledge and understanding of the literature by completing activities 1.1 on pages 2-6.

Glossary:

- Sibling : a brother or a sister
- Reconstitute : to attempt to put back into its original form.